

Music Masters and Leaders

Music Masters and Teachers

Part
The new building program even found enthusiastic response in the words of the high school song, "Wasatch, We Love Thee," written by Prof. O. A. Whitaker, music director of high and elementary schools. Verse three included mention of the new school. The words are as follows:

I

Wasatch, Dear, we love thee well;
'Tis here in peace and joy we dwell;
And in thy praise a song we'll swell,
Thy wond'rous destiny foretell.
Thou art nestled midst the hills,
With smiling brooks and laughing rills;
O, what rapture, my heart fills
With thanks to God my bosom thrills.

Refrain:

Wasatch, Oh, lovely Wasatch,
Beautiful, young and free;
Wasatch, Oh, my dear Wasatch,
Thou art home, art home to me.

II

Thy snow-capped spires towering high;
Gleaming 'neath the sunlit sky;
All with nature's beauties, vie,
As canyon breezes softly sigh;
Utah, Queen of all the West,
With a Wasatch, thou art blessed;
Lovelier than all the rest,
So the stars and flowers confess.

III

Before another year has gone,
We'll labor hard, and build a home,
A high school building of our own.
The world will wonder how we've grown.
In years to come when we are gray,
We'll hear the untold thousands say:
"God bless our parents, bless the day
They gave to us a better way."



O. A. Whitaker, beloved music teacher in Wasatch schools.

And then in the yearbook of 1913 is this tribute:

"Professor Whitaker cannot be too highly praised for his work in the schools.

"We might write page after page about him, but with the limited space at our command, we can give no more than a brief summary of his most important work.

"He presented a very creditable opera last Christmas and is completing a very successful school year by presenting the opera 'The Merry Milkmaids.'

"He has built up a band of which Wasatch may well be proud. Out of the worst medley of sounds imaginable, he has trained an orchestra that has played some excellent music for several entertainments this winter."

From its inception, Wasatch High School claimed many "firsts" in statewide athletic and cultural competition. One of the most noteworthy achievements came in the years 1911 and 1912 when Ila Fisher (Maughan) put Heber City and Wasatch County on the state's cultural map by winning the state public speaking contests two years in a row.

The contests, sponsored by the University of Utah, drew the best high school orators from the state to Salt Lake City for the two-day competition.

In 1911 Miss Fisher won the contest's gold medal with an original oration on "Mother's Day." The old Salt Lake Herald Republican of May 20, 1911, carried a picture of the winner with a headline: "Mother" Accorded the First Prize; Ila Fisher of Wasatch High School Wins Inter-scholastic Contest.

The Wasatch Wave of the following week reprinted the oration with a glowing tribute to its author and gold-medal winner.

Students of the new and growing high school were so proud of their classmate that they turned out en masse to meet her train as she arrived home from the contest. As she stepped from the train, Miss Fisher was greeted with stirring music from the school band. The group then went